

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Health
Hearing on “Examining Potential Ways to Improve the Medicare Program”
October 1, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

For years we have been warned of the looming insolvency of Medicare. Those alarm bells cannot be ignored. To allow the program to fall into bankruptcy would be to abandon the solemn promise we have made to seniors in Michigan and across the nation. As the committee of primary jurisdiction over much of the Medicare program, we cannot, and we will not let that happen. As the population ages with Baby Boomers entering retirement and the potential for provider shortages to increase in the near future, it is our duty to identify opportunities to improve the program. Today, we will examine bipartisan solutions to help put us back on track.

H.R. 556, the Prevent Interruptions in Physical Therapy Act of 2015, introduced by Representatives Bilirakis and Lujan, would ensure that Medicare patients receiving therapy services do not have to delay care in the event their treating provider gets sick or married.

H.R. 1934, the Cancer Care Payment Reform Act of 2015, is sponsored by Representatives McMorris Rodgers and Steve Israel. The legislation would build off of the promise in the SGR repeal legislation – also known as MACRA – by promoting innovative payment reforms designed to increase the quality of care delivered to Medicare seniors and reduce costs to the program.

Finally, we will examine a discussion draft authored by Representative Greg Walden that would streamline documentation requirements related to home health care delivery.

We will continue our work to keep the promise to seniors and improve the Medicare program.

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